



TASK FORCE LIBERTY

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 9, 2005

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, Iraq. Soldiers in Task Force Liberty continue to make a difference in Iraq. Across the spectrum of operations, Task Force Liberty partners with Iraqi Security Forces in Kirkuk, As Sulayminayah, Diyala and Salah Ad Din Provinces to build capable and sustainable Iraqi police and army forces.

Soldiers from Task Force Liberty conduct assistance and support missions with our Iraqi army counterparts as we employ military transition teams. These elements operate alongside Iraqi forces as a means to assist Iraqi army units as they move forward in their emerging role to provide security across North Central Iraq.

The mission of Task Force Liberty continues to build on these capabilities, supporting Iraqi army and police forces as they develop independent and sustainable operations.

Breaking the Cycle of Violence

In the last two weeks, operations in the Task Force Liberty area of operations have resulted in an estimated 10 insurgents killed, seven wounded, and an additional 414 suspected terrorists detained. Significant ammunition seized include 1,817 rocket, mortar, artillery and tank rounds, 636 small arms weapons and grenades, 1,126 anti-aircraft rounds, 7,384 rounds of small arms ammunition, 365 mines and 94 rocket propelled grenade launchers with 97 rocket propelled grenade rounds. Major equipment found included two sniper rifles, three night-vision devices, a range finder, a global positioning device, 965 assorted fuses and 100 pounds of explosives. Task Force Liberty operations also seized 38,200 U.S. Dollars and 4,100,250 worth of Iraqi Dinar.

Within the division's area of responsibility, 65 improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were discovered prior to detonation, preventing the needless loss of life. Since our operations began, more than half of all IEDs have been discovered before detonation.



Iraqi army and Task Force Liberty forces suspected terrorist to surrender

Pressure from Iraqi army and 1st Brigade Combat Team Soldiers operating near Bayji led to the surrender of wanted Iraqi terrorist Nabil Badriyah Al Nasiri in Tikrit on May 2, according to Capt. Hussein Ali Suleman, commander of Company C, 201st Iraqi Army Battalion.

The detainee is suspected of being a terrorist cell leader and involved in recent vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attacks and other terrorist activities.

Badriyah reportedly admitted that he felt compelled to give himself up because of pressure from Iraqi army and their partner unit, the 1st Battalion, 103rd Armor Regiment, known as Task Force Dragoon. Task Force Dragoon has been operating in the northern part of Salah Ad Din Province since January.

"We've been hunting for him since we got here," said Lt. Col. Philip Logan, Task Force Dragoon commander. "It started to turn for us when we conducted a series of raids in Bayji and picked up some of his bodyguards."

Badriyah "found himself in a tight circle," Hussein explained, because of the intense, intelligence-driven manhunt for him by Company C, 201st Iraqi Army Battalion and Task Force Dragoon.

1st Brigade Combat Team (Raider). Soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division from Fort Stewart, Georgia, continue to expand their partnership with Iraqi Security Forces, bringing security to the people of North Central Iraq.

Commanders and staff of the Iraqi army's 30th Brigade continued their staff development training in early May. The training, begun in late April, prepares the Iraqi officers and NCOs for an upcoming command post exercise, or CPX, where leaders rehearse the command and control skills needed to supervise Iraqi companies and battalions during combat operations.

Soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Task Force near Samarra continue to train their Iraqi army counterparts. Company A NCOs provided training on May 2 to teach their Iraqi partners methods for clearing buildings and rooms during close quarter combat. The 3-69 Soldiers focused on proper weapons orientation, movement



techniques and drills. At the same time, work continues on the Iraqi army barracks complex outside Samarra. The Iraqi battalion is expected to occupy their new headquarters in July.

In the area surrounding Bayji, 1st BCT Soldiers from the 1st Battalion 103rd Armor task force hosted a security conference on May 3 with the various Iraqi security agencies responsible for protecting the region's oil infrastructure. The meeting brought together Iraqi army, air force, police and the newly formed Ministry of Oil Security Battalions, the paramilitary forces trained specifically for the security of Iraq's valuable natural resource. The 1-103rd Soldiers provided oversight for the joint agency effort to secure Iraq's pipelines, refineries and power generation plants.

Iraqi soldiers from the 201st Iraqi Army Battalion distributed school supplies and sports equipment on May 3 to elementary schools in the Bayji area. The materials were supplied by 1-103 Armor Soldiers through family support group donations back in the United States.

3rd Brigade Combat Team (Sledgehammer). The Soldiers of the "Sledgehammer" Brigade Combat Team from Fort Benning, Georgia continue their work to bring peace and stability to Diyala Province.

The Diyala Province took one more step toward self reliance when the Provincial Government Center, and a large portion of the Civil Military Operations Compound, both in downtown Baqubah, were turned over to the Diyala Government.

Responsibility of the "Blue Dome," a nickname given to the Provincial Government Center, where the provincial council operates, was returned to Diyala, May 1, in a peaceful transition.

On May 5, Diyala Governor Ra'ad Hameed Juwad and Deputy Governor Auwf Rahumi Majeed moved their offices out of the Blue Dome and into the Binayat Al-Muhafadha Al-Qadima building. The Binayat building had long been home to the Governor's office, but was almost completely destroyed during the initial invasion of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



In the courtyard of the building, where a formal ceremony was held, Governor Ra'ad kissed and hoisted the Iraqi flag before cutting the blue ribbon attached to the door that led into his new office building.

Col. Steven Salazar, commander of Task Force Liberty's 3rd Brigade Combat Team, congratulated Diyala's citizens, government officials and Iraqi Security Forces on their progress towards freedom.

"We are honored to walk with you hand in hand on this road to peace and prosperity," Salazar said. "But soon, you will not need our hand and you will walk alone. We will be proud to watch you continue down that road as your honorable friends."

116th Brigade Combat Team (Warrior). The 116th Brigade Combat Team continues its efforts to aid the Iraqi government in the provinces of Kirkuk and As Sulaymaniyah as Iraqi officials work toward establishing and improving security, economic development, governance and communication in the region.

The period from April 23 to May 6 saw considerable progress in the training, equipping and operations of Iraqi Security Forces in the 116th BCT's area of operations. April 26 marked the graduation of over three hundred 31st and 33rd Iraqi Army Brigade soldiers from their initial entry training. A new Iraqi Army Base Support Unit was established near Kirkuk on May 1. The new unit has over 1,000 soldiers to support Iraqi Army operations. Equipment, including uniforms, basic gear, weapons and vehicles, was issued to both the 31st and 33rd Iraqi Army Brigades on May 2-3.

Task Force 1-148 Field Artillery continued training the 214th Iraqi Army Battalion on mission-essential tasks (METL) and certified the unit on security tasks. TF 1-148 FA also conducted 31st IA Brigade staff training.

TF 2-116 Armor helped the 208th Iraqi Army Battalion learn search techniques at traffic control points. The Iraqi police services have also made strides in training. TF 2-116 reported training the Rahim Awa police on first aid skills.

Iraqi army and police forces, including Iraqi ordnance disposal (IOD) teams, continue to operate autonomously of Coalition Forces in more and more cases. Iraqi ordnance disposal teams found and destroyed numerous improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and unexploded ordnance across the sector. Iraqi police in their area have also rounded



up kidnappers, rescued kidnap victims, arrested weapons dealers and insurgents during successful combined raids. Iraqi police arrested numerous IED makers.

Construction, agricultural and other economic activities continue vigorously in the 116th BCT's operations area. In Darbandikhan, progress continues on construction of border forts. The city mayors of Taza hosted the opening of a new footbridge. A new generator was delivered to the Sami al Assi Health Clinic. Farmers received new irrigation water for crops in Kirkuk Province. The 116th BCT's economic team is continuing to work on the Kirkuk Regional Water and Landfill Projects. There is also a well and water project in the works for Tarjil. Coalition and Iraqi leaders meet regularly at a Project Coordination Center (PJCC) to coordinate projects in the area. PJCC employees received computer training over the past two weeks.

278th Regimental Combat Team (The Volunteers). The 278th Regimental Combat Team from the Tennessee Army National Guard continues to train the Iraqi Security Forces to improve their skills and provide security for the local population.

On two occasions over the last few weeks, April 26 and May 3, Soldiers from 3rd Squadron, 278th RCT helped trained Qara Tapa and Jabarra police officers. The training included reporting, crowd control, and first aid classes and integrated practical exercises to reinforce the classroom information. This training will improve the confidence of the Iraqi police to protect their local populace and will improve the security within the towns of Qara Tapa and Jabarra.

During a joint Iraqi army and 278th RCT combat patrol on April 27, the soldiers were shot at from a small village Northwest of Jisr Naft. The Iraqi army lead element returned fire and cordoned off the area for a search. During the search of the village the Iraqi army soldiers discovered a book on bomb making, blasting caps, wire and switches. No detainees were taken in the search.

The Balad Ruz District of the Diyala Province held its first Regional Security Work Group on April 28. The meeting was focused on discussing and providing solutions to improve the security within the district. The meeting also facilitated a forum for leaders of the Iraqi Security Forces, civilian leaders, and Coalition Forces to sit down and work



together. This meeting is a start to help bring focus and direction on the security of the Balad Ruz District.

42nd Aviation Brigade (Eagle). Task Force Eagle continues to soar as part of Task Force Liberty as it provides 24 hours a day, seven days a week support of the ground forces throughout the 42nd Infantry Division's area of operations.

Highlights over the past two weeks for the Aviation Brigade include assisting the brigade combat teams during a number of combat operations with air assault, air cavalry and air attack assets, and supporting visits by several dignitaries including the CENTCOM Commander, General John Abizaid, and the popular entertainer Jessica Simpson.

The past two weeks have been busy, with 1-17th Cavalry out of FOBs McKenzie and Freedom and the 8-229th Attack Battalion at FOB Speicher flying more than 1,400 flying hours during 206 separate missions.

Going well beyond the important mission of battlefield circulation, both UH-60 Blackhawk battalions have been employed with air movements of combat troops, assisting the brigade combat teams with transporting American and Iraqi troops in swift assaults against suspected terrorist positions. All told, including battlefield circulation, 1-140th and 1-150th Aviation Battalions flew more than 800 hours, transporting 1,600 Soldiers and 75 tons of cargo throughout North Central Iraq.

The 642nd Division Aviation Support Battalion continues to maintain the aviation brigade's aircraft and ground vehicles, ensuring the safety and reliability of the brigade's assets. Lt. Col. Glenn Marchi and his team of maintenance Soldiers have made great strides in keeping the aircraft flyable.

Division Artillery (Thunder). 42nd Division Artillery (Divarty) Soldiers continue with their mission of force protection. Radar crews across North Central Iraq continue to assist combat patrols with points of origin for insurgent indirect fire attacks while counterfire artillery units continue their efforts to destroy the terrorists before the next round can be fired.

Rainbow Thunder conducted a Soldier re-enlistment ceremony during a visit from Medal of Honor recipients on April 9. The Divarty Headquarters Battery and 272nd



Chemical Company had 14 Soldiers re-enlist in front of Medal of Honor winners Gary Littrell and John McGinty. The Medal of Honor recipients praised the dedication and commitment that these Soldiers are making and will continue to make in the future.

Division Engineers (Detonator). Task Force Trailblazer, the 467th Engineer Battalion, continues assured mobility missions throughout AO LIBERTY along the highways. Soldiers from the 793rd Engineer Detachment (Utility) and Company C, 983rd Engineer Battalion continue work to improve the force protection and quality of life for Task Force Liberty Soldiers, including construction of multiple buildings, perimeter berm repairs, barrier emplacements, shelter hardening, or plumbing and electrical upgrades on our forward operating bases.

Engineer Brigade Soldiers supporting the region's reconstruction efforts continue working with the Iraqi Ministries of Power and Oil to ensure the success of reconstruction and rehabilitation of critical infrastructure facilities in the cities of Bayji, Kirkuk and As Sulaymaniyah. From security projects such as border forts and police stations to the power generation projects to deliver electricity to the Iraqi people, 42nd Brigade Engineers operate across the area of operations in support of our Soldiers and the Iraqi people.

Division Support Command (Muleskinner). Division Support Command (DISCOM) continues a strong emphasis on equipping the Iraqi army and police while continuing uninterrupted support of division units throughout AO Liberty. The material management center of the 42nd DISCOM built an internal section devoted entirely to handling and distributing equipment for Iraqi Security Forces.

The DISCOM established an Iraqi supply support activity and vehicle storage site at FOB Speicher. Recent deliveries to the brigades include 61 Gaz cargo trucks and three GAZ water and fuel trucks. Awaiting issue are five Kraz 7-ton cargo trucks.

To date, the DISCOM has issued to Iraqi forces through the combat brigades nearly 10 million rounds of various ammunition and 162 weapons systems. In support of the Iraqi army's computer and communication systems training, the DISCOM provided transition team members to FOB Caldwell for their training and orientation. This will



enable the Iraqi soldiers to continue the training and pass the effort into the hands of well trained Iraqis.

In continuing efforts to protect our Soldiers and facilities, 42nd DISCOM Soldiers coordinated, moved and emplaced more than 400 concrete barrier walls at key forward operating bases across the area of operations. The missions required several days of combat logistical patrol movements from FOB Speicher.

Conclusion

Task Force Liberty and our Iraqi Security Force partners continue to help provide a safe and secure Iraq. We continue to work with the Iraqi Security Forces to neutralize the insurgency. We continue to train, coach and support the Iraqi Security Forces as they develop their own independent capabilities to defeat the insurgency and improve the quality of life for the Iraqi people. We believe in the future of Iraq. To our families, friends, employers and the American people, Task Force Liberty thanks you for your steadfast support and encouragement.

Never Forget!

For more information on the 42nd Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty:

www.42id.army.mil
